

someone gets married, they file their taxes jointly which pushes them into a higher tax bracket. We fixed that in the Bush tax cut. Let us make marriage tax elimination permanent.

My hope is before the end of this year that our friends in the other body as well as our friends on the other side of the aisle will work with us to help couples like Jose and Magdalena Castillo.

PROVIDING A PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN). Pursuant to the order of the House of January 23, 2002, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I came to the floor today to talk about prescription drugs, how little this Congress is doing to provide a prescription drug benefit and how this body is doing even less to control the cost of prescription drugs, but I feel compelled to comment on the previous speaker's comments.

It is always nice to put a nice-looking family's picture in front of TV viewers and in front of this Congress and this Chamber and in front of the gallery to show how we care about people in this country, but the picture that he should have put in front of the voters, in front of the viewer, in front of this body is a picture of Ken Lay of Enron which got literally hundreds of millions of dollars in tax breaks as a result of the Bush administration's fervor for cutting taxes overwhelmingly for the rich and his fervor for protecting every corporate interest in the country and his fervor for giving tax giveaways, tax breaks to all of the biggest corporations in the country.

Six months ago this Congress gave \$5 billion to the airlines in tax breaks, and in this case, in airlines, simply subsidies and in terms of just dollars from the Federal Treasury, but did nothing for laid-off workers. Similarly, the Bush tax program that my friend from Illinois just mentioned as he put the picture of a nice working-class family, that tax benefit goes overwhelmingly to the richest people in this country.

Last year 100 million people, he said, in America benefitted from the tax cut. That may be true. People got a check for \$300, but 43 percent of all the tax benefits from the Bush tax cut goes to the 1 percent richest people in this country. Eighty percent of the benefits go to the 10 percent wealthiest people in this country.

What does that say? It says that Congress last year and last week, as it did it again, made a choice. They made a choice. Do we give tax cuts to Ken Lay and Enron and United Airlines and the biggest corporations and the richest individuals in this country, or do we provide a prescription drug benefit to 15 million senior citizens who have no drug coverage? We made a choice. The

Republicans in this body last week and last year made a choice. Do we cut taxes on the richest people in the country, on the largest corporations in the country and a few dollars from the rest of us, or do we pass legislation that provides money for education?

On issue after issue after issue, this Congress made the choice. It sides with corporate interests, on the chemical company on arsenic legislation. It sides with the insurance companies on privatizing Medicare. It sides with Wall Street in privatizing Social Security. It sides with the oil industry in writing environmental policy. It sides with Enron when writing energy policy. That is a choice. The choice is do we do what is right for the great majority of Americans or do we take the side of the wealthiest or the biggest corporations and the wealthiest individuals?

That picture, notwithstanding that my friend from Illinois put up, the fact is that that family may have gotten a little bit of money back in tax cuts, but that family will not be eligible for a prescription drug benefit because Congress, as they get older, because Congress will not do anything about prescription drugs because the money is not there. I repeat, Congress made the choice last week and made the choice last year, do my colleagues want a prescription drug benefit for the elderly or do they want to give tax cuts to the richest people in the country and the largest corporations in the country? Do they want to fully fund the education programs in this country that Congress says it wants to fund or do they want to give those tax breaks again to the wealthiest people? Do they fund our Medicare system which cuts payments for home healthcare, which cuts doctors' fees too much, which cuts hospitals, especially city hospitals in intercity and rural hospitals, or do they want to fund them properly or do they want to give away tax breaks to the richest citizens?

That is the choice we make here every day. That is the difference between Republicans and Democrats. Do we move forward and provide prescription drug benefits, provide for education, provide for Head Start, provide for food safety inspections, provide for strong environmental laws, or do we do the bidding of corporate America on issue after issue after issue? Give them the big tax breaks, weaken environmental laws, weaken food safety laws, weaken laws that protect the American public?

That is the choice we make. That is the choice that Congress made that was wrong in the last year and that the President and the administration has made. That is wrong. That is why we need to correct it.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 44 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m. today.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Preserved in Your grace, O Lord, at times we may seem at a standstill. But momentary inactivity may mean a fermenting of resolve.

Lord, grant to the Members of the House of Representatives a patience to listen to deepest convictions buried within the heart and their delegation. Inspire a practical wisdom that is wrapped in the art of timing.

Help all of Your people of this great Nation grow in perseverance. Deliver them from headline success, pollster popularity, and personal insecurity. Strengthened by faith in You, may quiet and stronger commitments prevail and produce enlightened options born of creative repression. Let yesterday's setbacks and compromise only store up energy for tomorrow's leap forward.

By taking one step at a time, may every American persevere in pursuing higher goals than those found in immediate satisfaction. May we prove faithful in seeking Your plan for us before reaction to every circumstance, now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. COBLE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

TRIBUTE TO THADDEUS STEVENS

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, on this day 136 years ago, one of the predecessors from my congressional district, a man named Thaddeus Stevens, stood in this Chamber and introduced the 14th